

REMARKS

Claims 11-13 and 22-39 are pending in the application. Claims 11-13, 27-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on U.S. Patent No. 4,543,557 to Schaefer. Claims 24-26, 31, 33-36 and 38-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Schaefer. Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on U.S. Patent No. 4,560,227 to Bukala and Yoon.

The claims have been amended. Claim 12 has been canceled.

In view of the following remarks, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claim 30 includes allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Claim 30 has now been amended into independent form. It is respectfully submitted that claim 30 is now allowable.

Applicant notes that the Office Action indicates that claim 26 also includes allowable subject matter. However, claim 26 is also listed as being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Clarification is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 based on Schaefer

Claims 11-13, 27-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on U.S. Patent No. 4,543,557 to Schaefer. Claims 24-26, 31, 33-36 and 38-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Schaefer.

Schaefer describes a fuse holder with a body that is secured on a vertical panel 3 between mounting arms 15'—15' engaging a back face of the panel and rearwardly facing shoulders 11a—11a engaging a front face of the panel. The shoulders and mounting arms cooperate “to hold the fuse holder body 4 securely in place within the panel opening 3a.” See Schaefer, column 4, lines 44-59. A separate fuse carrier 6 is then placed in the fuse holder body 4 and urged upward and forward by a tongue 26 of the fuse holder body resulting in interlocking between a shoulder of the fuse carrier and a shoulder of the fuse holder body. See Schaefer, column 3, lines 3-19. The fuse carrier

6 depresses the tongue 26 as it is inserted into the fuse holder body 4. See Schaefer, column 6, lines 12-17.

With respect to independent claim 11 of the present application, this claim has now been amended so as to recite a connector for through-wall connection with a locking element wherein “the locking element includes a pair of clamp parts configured to respectively engage upper and lower inner edges of a through opening of the wall, and the actuation wedge is configured to pivot so as to press the clamp parts respectively against upper and lower inner edges of the through opening so as to support the locking element on the inner edges.” Support for this amendment may be found, for example in the Specification at paragraphs [0010] and [0020]. Claim 11 also recites that the actuation wedge is “connected as a single piece to the locking element.” It is respectfully submitted that Schaefer does not disclose these features.

First, Schaefer does not teach or suggest an actuation wedge that is configured to pivot so as to press clamp parts respectively against upper and lower inner edges of a through opening so as to support the locking element on the inner edges, as recited in claim 11. In contrast, Schaefer merely describes a fuse holder body 4 that is secured within a panel by itself using shoulders 11 of the fuse holder body 4 held on a front face of a panel and mounting arms 15 of the fuse holder body 4 held on a rear face of the panel. See Schaefer, column 4, lines 44-59. As a fuse carrier 6 is inserted into the fuse holder body, an inclined surface 50 of the fuse carrier 6 engages with a corresponding surface 54b of the fuse holder body to depress a normally upwardly inclined locking tongue 26 of the fuse holder body 4. See Schaefer, column 6, lines 12-17. The fuse carrier 6 of Schaefer does not press on the shoulder 11, mounting arm 15 or any other element of the bottom of the fuse holder body that is adjacent the panel 3. The fuse carrier 6 merely depresses the locking tongue 26. Thus, Schaefer does not teach or suggest an actuation wedge configured to pivot so as to press a clamp part against a lower inner edge of the through opening, as recited in claim 11. Moreover, no parts of the fuse carrier 6 of Schaefer press against the fuse holder body to support the fuse holder body 4 on the panel. The fuse holder body 4 of Schaefer is secured on the panel by itself. Thus, Schaefer does not teach or suggest a wedge configured to press against clamp parts “so as to support the locking element on the inner edges,” as recited in claim 11.

Second, Schaefer does not teach or suggest a pivotable actuation wedge that is "connected as a single piece to the locking element," as recited in claim 11. The Office Action sets forth that the fuse carrier 6 of Schaefer is a pivotable actuation wedge. To the extent that the fuse carrier 6 of Schaefer could be read as a pivotable actuation wedge, this feature of Schaefer is not "connected as a single piece" to the fuse holder body of Schaefer. In contrast, Schaefer describes that the fuse carrier is insertable into and removable from the fuse holder body. See Schaefer, column 2, lines 12-15.

Thus, because Schaefer fails to teach or suggest the above features of claim 11, it cannot anticipate or render obvious claim 11 or its dependent claims 12, 13, 22, 23 and 26-29.

With respect to independent claim 24 of the present application, similar to claim 11, that claim also recites an actuation wedge that is "connected as a single piece to the locking element." Thus, claim 24 is patentable over Schaefer for the reasons described above with respect to claim 11 regarding this feature.

Moreover, claim 24 also recites that "a first surface of the actuation wedge and a second surface of a side of the clamp part facing the actuation wedge each include a respective slip safety device." The Office Action admits that this feature is not described in Schaefer. See Detailed Action, section 5, lines 4-5. However, the Office Action contends that it would have been obvious to include a slip safety device on the downwardly extending shoulder 52 of fuse carrier 6 and the rearwardly facing shoulder 54a of fuse holder body 4 of Schaefer, which are presented in the Office Action as analogous to the recited first and second surfaces. It is respectfully submitted that there would have been no reason for a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Schaefer in such a manner. The fuse carrier 6 of Schaefer is held in the fuse holder body 4 by a tongue 26 that pushes the fuse carrier upward and forward such that the shoulders are interlocked. Releasing the fuse carrier 6 of Schaefer from the fuse holder body 4 requires pressing on a gripping handle to release the carrier from interlocking engagement. See Schaefer, column 3, lines 3-19. Thus, because there is already an interlock arrangement, there would be no need for a slip safety device in Schaefer. Moreover, if Schaefer were modified to include a slip safety device, as suggested in the Office Action, the slip safety device would prevent the fuse carrier 6 from being pushed downward with

the gripping handle so as to release the carrier from the body, thereby rendering the fuse holder inoperable. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that such a modification of Schaefer would not have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art. Thus, because Schaefer fails to teach or suggest these features of claim 24, and the features are not obvious in view of Schaefer, it cannot render obvious claim 24 or its dependent claims and 25, 31-36 and 38.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 11-13, 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), and of claims 24-26, 31, 33-36 and 38-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), based on Schaefer is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on Bukala and Yoon

Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on U.S. Patent No. 4,560,227 to Bukala in view of Yoon.

Bukala describes a panel mounted fuse-holding apparatus having “clips 28 [that] resiliently spring outward to engage the front of the panel 34 by means of the steps in the stepped end portion 40 thereof.” See Bukala, col. 4, lines 53-55. The inner faces of one of the pair of clips is bridged by rearwardly projecting web 66, which has a resilient backing finger 64. See Bukala, col. 4, lines 63-65. The clips also have stepped portions 40 that hold the panel in place when they engage the “front side of the panel 34.” See Bukala, col 4, lines 60-62.

Yoon describes a plurality of connection terminal assemblies 1 fitted together with a cover 9 thereon. See Yoon, column 2, lines 26-30, and Fig. 1.

Independent claim 37 of the present application recites a connector for a through-wall connection with a selectable number of plate-shaped contact housings, a terminal element, “a first locking element attached to the terminal element” and “a second locking element” attached to one of the plate-shaped contact housings.

It is respectfully submitted that neither Bukala nor Yoon, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a first locking element attached to a terminal element, as recited in independent claim 37. In contrast, Bukala describes fuse holder units 10 each with snap-in mounting means 28 and 64 to secure each fuse holder unit in an aperture. See Bukala, column 4, lines 16-25. As noted in the

Office Action, Bukala does not disclose a terminal element, as recited. See Detailed Action, page 3, last 3 lines. Regarding Yoon, that reference merely describes a cover 9 attached to a terminal assembly 1. The cover does not include a locking element attached thereto. Moreover, there would be no reason to include locking elements on a terminal element attached to the fuseholder units of Bukala, because the fuseholder units of Bukala are each independently mounted in the aperture with its own mounting means 28 and 64. Thus, any combination of Bukala and Yoon, to the extent proper, could not render claim 37 obvious.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 37 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Bukala in view of Yoon is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Erik R. Swanson

Registration No.: 40,833
DARBY & DARBY P.C.
P.O. Box 770
Church Street Station
New York, New York 10008-0770
(212) 527-7700
(212) 527-7701 (Fax)
Attorneys/Agents For Applicant